

The header image features a close-up of an elephant's head on the left, with its trunk pointing towards the center. On the right, there is a circular seal of the Florida House of Representatives, which includes a building and the word 'REPRESENTATIVES' at the top. The text 'Message Points' is overlaid in a large, white, stylized font with a slight shadow effect.

Message Points

The House Majority Office

Carlos Lopez-Cantera, Majority Leader

Majority Message Points

Student Success and Teacher Quality

Issue: HB 7019

Florida is a leader in education reform, but to ensure that our state's students receive a world class education that prepares them for a career in a competitive global marketplace, we must continue to make progress. The key to real progress in education reform is retaining our state's best and brightest educators by rewarding high-performing teachers.

Key Points:

- Removes barriers that impair the ability of school districts to reward those teachers who have the greatest impact on student performance, ultimately putting students first and guaranteeing every child in Florida receives the best possible quality education by ensuring high performing teachers are in every classroom
- Implements the Race to the Top grant reforms by aligning educator performance evaluations and compensation systems with the agreements already contained in the Race to the Top grant program
- Ensures that the best and brightest teachers are instructing the students that need them the most
- Eliminates teacher tenure over time, with appropriate consideration provided to educators currently on professional service contracts (a.k.a. "tenure")

Student Success and Teacher Quality – Discussion Points

Performance Evaluations- Professionalizes Florida's PreK-12 education system by basing compensation and personnel decisions on an educator's ability to execute the duties for which they were hired, aligning Florida's teachers to other professions.

- Research shows teacher effectiveness to be the most important school-level variable that impacts student learning. The goal is for children to have teachers who have proven their ability to foster student learning gains.
- Consistent with the Race to the Top program, school districts and charter schools will adopt instructional personnel and school administrator performance evaluation systems that are at least 50% based upon student learning growth.
 - Measurement of student learning growth will recognize each student's unique starting point by comparing prior student performance with learning achieved while assigned to the educator.
 - Student growth considers: student performance, growth trends over time, attendance, disabilities, and English proficiency.
 - Actual growth is demonstrated by the student's performance on state and/or district student assessments.
 - For subject areas in which no statewide assessment exists, districts can develop their own assessment or select pre-existing assessments to measure student mastery of content.
 - Beginning July 1, 2011, teacher and administrator annual performance evaluations will differentiate among 4 levels: highly effective, effective, needs improvement/developing, and unsatisfactory.
- School administrators are held accountable for ensuring and maintaining effective classroom teachers.
- School districts will make employment and workforce reduction decisions based on program needs and employee performance evaluation results, putting a priority on high performance rather than seniority.
 - Performance evaluations fairly and efficiently reward the most effective teachers by linking performance to employment decisions.

Salary Schedules- Revises the compensation system and bases it on fairness and performance so that all educators whose students demonstrate significant learning gains are recognized and rewarded, regardless of seniority.

- Beginning July 1, 2014, consistent with the Race to the Top agreements, school districts and charter schools will implement new “performance” salary schedules that provide salary increases based on performance and other factors.
 - Performance salary schedules incentivize professionals to enter the teaching field by allowing them to earn higher salaries faster than under the old system.
 - Performance salary schedules incentivize current educators to strive for constant student growth.
 - Under the current salary schedule, no matter how exceptional and effective a teacher is, his or her salary remains bound to a “years of service model”.
 - Under the current salary schedule, no matter how poor a teacher’s performance is, his or her salary will automatically increase under the “years of service model”.
- Currently employed educators may choose to remain on their current salary schedule or move to the new performance schedule.

Contracts- We must shy away from accommodating the idea of job entitlement, and instead create a “real world” common sense professional working environment in which job performance is mandatory to maintain employment.

- Employees hired after July 1, 2011, or those on an annual contract as of July 1, 2011, will be employed on an annual contract basis.
- Educators currently on a professional service contract can either retain their status or choose to move to the new performance salary schedule and simultaneously move to annual contracts.
 - The goal is to foster a team-oriented environment centered on achieving student growth and success, by ensuring that the highest performing educators are being employed.
 - Workforce reductions must be prioritized to retain the highest performing employees first, regardless of seniority.
- Annual contracts are based on a three-year average of a carefully calibrated measure of teacher performance.